

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

NORRIS WATERSHED LAND TRANSFER
ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is proposing to transfer a 420-acre parcel of fee-owned land (Tract XTNR-117) adjacent to the TVA Norris Dam Reservation in Anderson County, Tennessee, to the city of Norris (City). This land adjoins current City property and is managed under lease as part of the Norris Watershed. The City has requested this action to augment other Norris Watershed property, which was transferred by TVA in the 1950s. Both the City and TVA property are managed together to provide various types of low impact recreation, potable water, and occasional forest products. TVA proposes to transfer the property in fee to the City pursuant to Section 4(k)a of the TVA Act.

The 420-acre tract is part of the public recreation available in the Norris vicinity, and the proposed action would result in a use consistent with the surrounding existing land use. No federally listed as threatened or endangered species or historic properties are known to exist in the project area, and the area is not within a floodplain. Therefore, TVA has determined that with the requirement that Best Management Practices (BMPs) be utilized during any ground disturbance, the transfer of 420 acres of Tract XTNR-117 would have minor, insignificant impacts.

No Action Alternative – Under this alternative, the land (420 acres) would remain in TVA ownership, and the lease agreement with the City would continue until expiration in 2010 unless renewed by TVA.

Action Alternative – Under this alternative, TVA would transfer 420 acres to the City under Section 4(k)a of the TVA Act. The property would be restricted to public recreation use and would continue to be managed for that purpose by the City. The remaining 33 acres, which include the former Civilian Conservation Corps camp, backwash water lagoon, 8-inch water main, 6-inch water main, and two small stone dams, would remain TVA property; would be designated for Sensitive Resource Management; and would remain under the existing lease agreement. The entire 33-acre Clear Creek tract would be designated as the Clear Creek Habitat Protection Area in order to correspond better to the occurrence of the state listed Kentucky rosinweed (*Silphium lasiocarpum*) and other natural resources.

Under either alternative, the entire 453 acres would remain in public ownership and continue to be managed for informal recreation activities (hiking, hunting, biking, horseback riding), managed for forestry, and managed to provide watershed protection.

Mitigation Measures

Mowing of the roadside between the signs designated on Clear Creek Road would be avoided during the growing season (April 1 to October 1). Avoiding mowing during the

growing season would enhance the success of the Kentucky rosinweed, a state listed species occurring on the roadside site. Any maintenance of the roadside, such as mowing and controlling woody vegetation, would take place from October through March.

If human remains are encountered during any future activities that the City may conduct within Tract XTNR-117, work would cease in the area (including a 50-foot buffer) in order to protect the site until a determination of the remains are made and consultation with state and local officials occur. The City would comply with all state burial laws.

BMPs would be used with all ground-disturbance activities including forestry, road and trail construction, or maintenance.

The fee tract would be transferred to the City on the condition that all of the lands, properties, interests, and rights transferred be used solely for low impact informal public recreation (such as hiking, hunting, equestrian, mountain bike riding, etc.), in accordance with generally recognized standards of city operation. In addition, the City would be prohibited from leasing, selling, or dividing the tract into smaller parcels; and the City would continue to manage and maintain the forest resources on the fee tract, in order to preserve the Norris Dam State Park historic viewshed. The fee tract includes the watershed which is the source of water supply for the City; therefore, the use of the fee tract by the City must be consistent with its protection.

Based on the attached Environmental Assessment, we conclude that the proposed transfer of 420 acres of TVA land would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the environment. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact is contingent upon successful implementation of BMPs to control erosion from storm water runoff during construction.

Harold M. Draper for

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Jon M. Loney, Manager
NEPA Administration
Environmental Policy and Planning
Tennessee Valley Authority

Date Signed